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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Entered as second-class matter November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 1, 1879

VOL. IV

NEW YORK, MAY 20, 1911

No. 28

Mr. E. A. Coffin contributed recently to The Normal Review, which is published at California, Penn., an article on The Status and Justification of Latin. The arguments that he adduces in defence of its value are the familiar arguments and he claims no originality for them. But he begins his article with a comparison of the number of students in Latin in secondary schools in 1890 and in 1906 as shown by the reports of the Bureau of Education. In 1890, 100,152 pupils, or about 33% of the total enrollment in secondary schools, were studying Latin. In 1906 the number had increased to 413,595, or over 50% of the total number of pupils. He gives the following tables:

Subject	Percentage 1890	Percentage 1906
Latin	33.62	50.17
Greek	4.32	1.85
French	9.41	11.12
German	11.48	21.04
Algebra	42.77	57.57
Geometry	20.07	28.35
Physics	21.36	15.43
Chemistry	9.62	6.86
Percentage 1895		
Hist'y other than U. S.	34.65	42.17
Trigonometry	3.25	2.16
Astronomy	5.27	1.39
Rhetoric	31.31	49.35
Physical Geography.....	24.93	20.64
Geology	5.20	2.58
Physiology	31.08	20.57
Percentage 1898		
English Literature.....	38.90	50.63
Civics	21.41	17.59

In the table given above, the subjects whose percentages are given for 1895 or later were not reported in 1890.

These statistics have been cited more than once. Professor Kelsey some years ago tried to show in a similar fashion the vitality of Latin studies. I have always doubted the justice of the conclusions drawn from them. The period chosen was one that witnessed a great expansion in public high schools. For example, in the old city of New York there were no public high schools, but, after the amalgamation into the Greater City, the high school system which had previously been developed in Brooklyn was extended to Manhattan. This expansion in the number of high schools has had the

effect of increasing enormously the number of high school pupils. If the numbers given above are correct, in 1890 there were about 300,000 pupils in secondary schools; in 1906 over 800,000. Now in the cities, where the bulk of this increase has taken place, the proportion of pupils that finish the high school is smaller than elsewhere, and in such places as New York and Chicago it is probably smallest of all. In order therefore actually to prove that the influence of Latin is extending, it would be necessary to show that the proportion of pupils continuing the study of Latin throughout the whole course had increased. This I doubt very much. On the other hand, I have distinct information that the proportion of students of Latin in the colleges is steadily decreasing. In one great institution of the country the number of students taking Latin in the freshman class is now only one-third as great as it was fifteen years ago. In very few colleges where freedom of election is permitted has the proportion of Latin students kept pace with the increase in total enrollment. How much of this loss in the freshman class is due to the teaching in the high schools I am unable to say, but that the high school teachers do their work with earnestness and thoroughness every one who has studied the subject knows. If, therefore, pupils in the high schools give up their Latin in the colleges at the earliest opportunity, the fault cannot be in the thoroughness with which it is taught in the schools, but must be either with the Latin itself, which none of us would admit, or with the aims and methods of teaching. In this connection the New York Medical Journal in an editorial of December 24, 1910 quotes with much approval the suggestion of Dr. E. D. M. Gray, President of the University of New Mexico, who in a pamphlet entitled Latin in the Secondary School, published at Albuquerque, December 1910, urges very strongly that Latin should be taught in the same fashion as modern languages are taught. This means, of course, the oral method and colloquial use of the language. The Medical Journal commends this pamphlet to medical men as well as to everybody interested in the problems connected with education. What of ourselves?

G. L.

In the course of some pleasant remarks on physicians Pliny the Elder, commenting on how doctors

disagree, declares that it has become necessary to write on a man's tombstone that he died, not because he had any disease, but because he had too many doctors. The pertinence of this remark will be apparent to the reader of the present paragraph. The suggestion that the cure for all the ills, real or fancied, in the classical situation is to teach Latin and Greek as modern languages are taught reminds me of the incessant lamentations of the teachers of modern languages about the ineffectiveness of their own teaching: witness in particular the crushing indictment of the teaching of modern languages in this country (which surely must involve constant use of the oral and the direct method) by Professor Grandgent, cited in part in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4. 74-77, 82-85. Of statistics it has been repeatedly said that they prove anything. Some comments on statistics were made in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 4. 201 in remarks on the discussion of Mr. Soldan's paper at St. Louis. In tracing the real or apparent subsidence of classical studies at any given college within the last two decades or so we need to know a host of factors, such as the changes in the entrance requirements of that college and the changes in the requirements of the college for its degree or degrees. Local conditions, too, must be taken into account. My information is that in the Middle West French is fighting for existence. The sufficient reason is that the Middle West is German in population. In yet other districts, whose identity will readily occur to one, French has, for local reasons, the upper hand of German. It has been repeatedly charged, on foundations apparently as secure as lie beneath many of the despairing pronouncements concerning the Classics, that in the High Schools, for example, such desperately 'practical' subjects as mathematics would be little studied if they were not required and still fortified by that traditional backing which recently many out of ignorance or selfish interest in other subjects have been denying to the Classics. A study of the tables quoted from Mr. Coffin's article, so far as those tables relate to the sciences, might easily suggest to many that the hold of the sciences in this country is slipping! Certainly the constant emphasis laid on the bad results of the teaching of Latin in school and college—an emphasis to my mind not justified by the facts—cannot lead to a revival of support for the Classics from the unthinking or the ignorant, and must be a sore trial often to the faithful.

C. K.

LATIN AND GREEK FOR STUDENTS OF FRENCH

Some years ago, when I was teaching French in a city high school, a group of boys who wished to begin Greek were looking for a teacher. There being no one whose business it was to teach Greek, I gave up my one vacant period during the school

day to starting the lads, along the pleasant path toward an acquaintance with the language and literature of ancient Hellas.

Nearly every one who heard of a French teacher conducting a class in Greek—I did it for three years—expressed surprise at such a combination of languages. I could see no reason then for the surprise, nor do I see one now. Why not Greek and French as well as Latin or German and French? Truth compels me to state that the last-mentioned combination has always seemed to me a particularly unnatural one. The two languages in question have little in common except the fact that both are modern. On the other hand, Latin is merely highly-inflected French, or French is a less-inflected and more supple Latin. So closely are the two connected that I doubt very much whether any person without a fair knowledge of the Latin language and literature can lay claim to an intimate acquaintance with French. Some years ago I heard a professor in a French university state to a class of foreign students that *secte* is a derivative of the Latin verb *sequor*, a blunder which he could never have made had he clearly understood the laws of Latin accent and its persistence in French. The whole subject of French genders is simplified and made clear when the student understands the relation of gender in French nouns to that of the corresponding Latin substantives; the tonic accent in French finds a similar explanation; but all that the historical grammars say on these subjects has little meaning for the student who knows no Latin; he does not understand what the grammarians are talking about.

The need of Latin for the student of French seems plain to any one who gives the matter a moment's thought; to most persons, however, the need of Greek is less apparent. The Greeks and the French are supposed to have nothing in common, and the two languages are, we are told, so different.

In this connection, I am reminded of the statements of two historians, writing within about a century of each other.

One runs thus (Acts 17:21): 'Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ πάντες καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον εὐκαίρουν ἢ λέγειν τι καὶ ἀκοῦειν καινότερον.

The other is as follows (De Bello Gallico 4.5): Est autem hoc Gallicae consuetudinis, uti et viatorum, etiam invitos, consistere cogant, et quid quisque eorum de quaque re audierit aut cognoverit quaeuunt, et mercatores in oppidis vulgus circumstat quia usque ex regionibus veniant quasque ibi res cognoverint pronuntiare cogat.

Does one of us ever read either of these passages without thinking of the other, and at the same time recalling the fact that those restless Galatians to whom the apostle wrote were Gallo-Greeks?

There were Greek settlements—did we not labor-